



New York City is one of the most expensive in the world. Senior visitors shouldn't be shocked if a dumpy, little hotel room near the theater district is \$500 a night. A seafood dinner in Manhattan could be \$100, while in smaller cities an identical meal goes for \$35.

A prime orchestra seat ticket in Philly could cost \$100. For the same at a Broadway theater, the price could set you back \$250 and more. However, New York City is an exciting experience. And, if you want to indulge yourself in Manhattan's hotels, restaurants, museums and theaters, some penny-pinching and heavy homework could cut some of the outrageous costs down to merely grossly overpriced. Check fares before you fly. The lowest are red-eye (late night) flights Tuesdays thru Thursdays. Bus and train fares are much cheaper, and they take you directly to downtown. To and from airports, don't just grab a cab. Check first with Uber, shuttles and vans for the lowest prices.

There are inexpensive hostels in downtown Manhattan where you can relive GI or summer camp nights in bunk rooms. When planning, check with your travel agent for deals, or do homework for hotel bargains listed with online travel agencies such as TripAdvisor, CheapTickets, Travelocity or Orbitz. If a member of AARP, AAA or retired military, check for deeper discounts.

Consider bed and breakfasts. They're not cheap in prime Manhattan locations. However, if it's not a holiday weekend, you may get one for \$100 a night, along with free ham and eggs in the am that would cost you \$25 in a nearby restaurant.

A quick subway ride gets you anywhere in Manhattan. Don't grab a cab to go a mile or two. It could cost \$30 or \$40 while the meter clicks in stalled traffic. You can get there quicker by subway or, if in good physical shape, a sightseeing walk.

If your schedule is in Manhattan for theater, dining and museums, don't book a hotel in the Bronx because it's cheaper. You'll have to pay for tedious taxi, bus or subway rides every day to get back to Manhattan.

Famous NYC restaurants have great menus, but prices can be out of sight. Find ethnic delis, order sandwiches and eat al fresco on a park bench. Street vendor carts can be very reasonable. Just make sure they're clean, and drink only bottled water, juices or sodas.

NYC's subway system is great. MetroCards with special pricing for seniors can get you all over for a couple of bucks. Instead of being stuffed into a tourist boat for \$50 to see Miss Liberty and other sights in New York Harbor, ride the free Staten Island Ferry.

One of the most pleasant things to do in NYC is to sit and stroll in Central Park. There are many free band concerts, lectures and exhibitions. In season, you may be lucky to see and hear Shakespeare in the Park.

The city's almost unlimited offerings of dining, musicals and concerts make it well worth any visit. Theater prices remain high, except for at some of the smaller theaters in Greenwich Village. Also check out free or low-cost concerts at Manhattan schools, colleges, community centers and churches.

Before you buy expensive Broadway or concert tickets, check each morning at TKTS booths and other two-fer locales. Get tickets for that day's not-yet-sold-out performance at some theaters at half-price.

For art lovers, there's the Metropolitan Museum, Guggenheim, Museum of Modern Art, Museum of Natural History and many other cultural venues. Check for times and days when entry is free at some museums, or when you can get senior discounts.

A visit to NYC is never cheap, but if you do smart online homework, you'll find ways to cut prices on lodging, dining and for everything else to almost reasonable.